# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
# LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:547
ANSWERED ON:05.05.2008
HOARDING BY PRIVATE COMPANIES TRADERS
Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari;Nikhil Kumar Shri

**Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:**

(a) the limit fixed at present on the stocks of essential commodities held by the private companies/traders;

(b) the current stock of the said commodities held by these companies/traders as on date;

(c) whether these companies/traders have resorted to large scale hoarding of essential commodities leading to a spurt in prices during the last three months;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the remedial steps taken in this regard;

(e) whether the Government proposes to amend the present legislation regarding availability of essential commodities and hoarding to further empower the States to check hoarding; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

## Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a), (b), (c), (d), (e) & (f): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO.547 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 05.05.2008 IN THE LOK SABHA.

(a) & (b): Central Government has not specified any limits on the stocks of essential commodities that can be held by private companies/traders.State Governments have, however, been delegated powers to fix suitable stock limits in respect of wheat, rice, pulses, edible oils and edible oilseeds. So far, under these delegated powers, 8 States have prescribed stocks limits for wheat and/or pulses, 4 States have prescribed licensing requirements while one State has made declaration of stocks mandatory. The details are given at Annexure-I.

Further, to have an assessment of major purchases made by the private trade, Government has issued the `Rice (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) Order, 2007` and `Wheat (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) Order,2008` making it mandatory for any Company/Firm/Individual to declare purchases (along with stocks held) of rice and wheat beyond 10,000 tonnes during Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2007-08 and Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2008-09 respectively. During RMS 2007-08, the `Wheat (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) Order, 2007` was issued by the Government, making it mandatory for private traders purchasing more than 50,000 tonnes of wheat to declare purchases and stocks to the Government. The total stocks declared by the companies/firms as per the returns filed up to 31.3.2008 with the Central Government are 6.05 lakh tonnes of wheat and 5.25 lakh tonnes of rice.

The details of all the stocks of essential commodities held by private trade in the country (apart from the returns filed as per statutory requirement referred above) are not maintained by the Department.

(c) & (d): All the State Governments have not imposed stock limits and, therefore, the extent of stocks held by private trade across the country can not be assessed. In view of the rising prices of certain essential commodities, State Governments have been continuously advised by the Central Government for taking effective action (including imposition of stock limits) to check any hoarding of these commodities.

(e) & (f): No, Sir. Adequate powers are already available with the State Governments under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and Prevention of Black Marketing & Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 to check hoarding and black marketing of essential commodities.